

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants have reviewed and considered the final Office Action mailed on August 5, 2008, and the references cited therewith. Claims 3, 5-8, 13, 16-23, 25, 27-31, 34-36, 40, 41, 43, and 44 are currently pending in the application. Claims 13, 16-21, and 28-30 have been previously withdrawn. Claims 3, 8, 31, 40, and 41 are currently amended. Claims 4, 33, and 42 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Examiner Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner for the interview held on September 22, 2008 between the Applicants' representatives and the Examiner. An agreement was reached that the inclusion of the features of now-cancelled claims 4 and 42 in claim 8 would render claim 8 allowable, despite the exclusion of the features of claim 41 from claim 8. No other agreement was reached. The submission of an Information Disclosure Statement in conjunction with the present Response was also discussed.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Office Action dated August 5, 2008, the Examiner states that "[c]laim 42 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims." Applicants have amended the claims accordingly. In particular, claims 8, 31, and 40 are amended to include the allowable features of claims 4 and 42. In accordance with the agreement made with the Examiner as described above, claims 8, 31, and 40 should now be in condition for allowance despite the omission of the features of claim 41 from these claims. In addition, claims 3, 5-8, 22, 23, 25, 27, 31, 34-36, 40, 41, 43, and 44 are also in condition for allowance at least by virtue of their dependency on amended claims 8, 31, and 40.

Applicants are not conceding in this application that any of the original and/or previously presented claims are unpatentable over the art cited by the Examiner, as the

present claim amendments and cancellations are only for facilitating expeditious prosecution of the allowable subject matter noted by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 112

The Examiner rejects claim 41 under the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 as failing to provide antecedent basis for the feature of “the recess.” Claim 41 has been amended to depend on claim 8, which provides antecedent basis for this feature.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejects claims 3-8, 22, 23, 25, 27, 31-41, and 43-44 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as obvious over U.S. Patent 4,710,165 (hereinafter “McNeil”) in view of U.S. Patent 4,743,232 (hereinafter “Kruger”) and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,028,355 (hereinafter “Cope”). Claims 4 and 33 are cancelled, rendering the rejection against these claims moot. As shown above, the remaining rejected claims include features indicated as allowable by the Examiner. Therefore, this rejection is overcome.

CONCLUSION

If a Petition for Extension of Time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a) is required, the petition is herewith made. The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees that may be required, or credit any overpayment made with this Office Action, to Deposit Account Number 19-3140.

In light of all the foregoing, believing that all things raised in the Final Office Action have been addressed, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the prior rejections and objections, as well as allowance of the claims and passage of the application to issue. If the Examiner would care to discuss any remaining matters by phone, Applicants invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned at (214) 259-0900.

Respectfully submitted,


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